



Connecticut Vineyard and Winery Association

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Testimony of Jamie Jones Before the General Law Committee

**RE: HB 5280 AA Requiring Free Water At Certain Events Where Alcohol Is Served
February 22, 2011**

Members of the General Law Committee, my name is Jamie Jones and my family owns the Jones Family Farms and Winery in Shelton. Due to business matters I am unable to deliver this testimony in person, but it is very important to vineyards across the State. I am the President of the Connecticut Vineyard and Winery Association (CVWA). We are a private, non-profit association of twenty (20) farm wineries from around the state. Our goal is to promote the cultivation of grapes, spread awareness of the quality wines being produced in our state and market our businesses through the Connecticut Wine Trail brochure and our website. Together our farms comprise over 2000 acres of open space and our businesses received 500,000 visits from travelers searching for local wines. We are an important part of both Connecticut's beautiful landscape and local economy. I come before you today to voice our concern regarding HB 5280 An Act Requiring Free Water at Certain Events Where Alcohol is Served.

Part of the licensing requirement from area health districts requires the State to classify businesses according to their water supply. If the existing water supply does not comply with their standards then the business is prohibited from serving tap water, they must only serve bottled. Although in most cases the well water that is on the property is potable, it is not up to the standard of being a public water supply. Many of our wineries in this situation make bottled water available for sale, because of their classification. If the bill were to pass, they would then be mandated to give away bottled water, which would be very costly.

We are willing to work with the committee as well as the sponsor, Representative Lesser, to hopefully come to a mutually beneficial solution to the bill that is before us. Thank you for your consideration.